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BULLETIN  
OF THE  
AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

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**Vol. XL**

**1908.**

**No. 4**

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OCEANS AND ENCLOSED SEAS: A STUDY IN  
ANTHROPO-GEOGRAPHY.\*

BY

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The water of the earth's surface, viewed from the standpoint of anthropo-geography, is one, whether it appears as atmospheric moisture, spring, river, lake, brackish lagoon, enclosed sea-basin or open ocean. Its universal circulation, from the falling of the dews to the vast sweep of ocean current, causes this inviolable unity. Variations in the geographical forms of water are superficial and constantly changing; they pass into one another by almost imperceptible gradations, shift their unstable outlines at the bidding of the mobile, restless element. In contrast to the land, which is marked by diversity of geologic structure and geographic form, the world of water is everywhere approximately the same, excepting only the difference in the mineral composition of sea water as opposed to that of spring and stream. Therefore, wherever man has touched it, it has moulded him in much the same way, given the same direction to his activities, dictated the use of the same implements and methods of navigation. As maritime trader or colonist, he has sailed to remote, unknown, yet familiar, coasts, and found himself as much at home as on his native shores. He has built up maritime empires, the centre of whose dominion, race and commerce, falls somewhere in the dividing yet uniting sea.

Man must be grouped with the air and water as part of the mobile envelope of the earth's surface. The mobility which maintains the unity of air and water has caused the unity of the human race. Abundant facilities of dispersal often give animal forms a wide or

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\* Read before the Association of American Geographers, Chicago, December 31, 1907.

cosmopolitan distribution. Man, by appropriating the mobile forces in the air and water to increase his own powers of locomotion, has become a cosmopolitan being, and made the human race reflect the unity of atmosphere and hydrosphere.

Always the eternal unrest of the moving waters has knocked at the door of human inertia to arouse the sleeper within; always the flow of stream and the ebb of tide have sooner or later stirred the curiosity of the land-born barbarian about the unseen destination of these marching waters. Rivers by the mere force of gravity have carried him to the shores of their common ocean, and placed him on this highway of the world. Then from his sea-girt home, whether island or continent, he has timidly or involuntarily followed the track which headland-dotted coast, or ocean current, or monsoon, or trade wind marked out for him across the pathless waters, so that at the gray dawn of history he appears as a cosmopolite, occupying every part of the habitable earth.

These sporadic oversea wanderings, with intervals of centuries or millenniums between, opened to his occupancy strange and remote lands, in whose isolation and new environment he developed fresh variations of mind, body and cultured achievements, to arm him with new weapons in the struggle for existence. The sea which brought him bars him for a few ages from his old home, till the tradition of his coming even is lost. Then with higher nautical development, the sea loses its barrier nature; movements of people and trade recross its surface to unite those who have been long severed and much differentiated in their mutual remoteness. The ensuing friction and mingling weed out the less fit variations of each, and combine in the new race the qualities able to fortify a higher type of man. Not only seas and oceans, but also mountains and deserts serve to isolate the migrant people who once has crossed them; but wastes of water raise up the most effective barriers.

The transformation of the ocean into a highway by the development of navigation is a late occurrence in the history of man and is perhaps the highest phase of his adaptation to environment, because an adaptation which has placed at his disposal that vast water area constituting three-fourths of the earth's surface from which he had previously been excluded. Moreover, it was adaptation to an alien and hostile element, whose violent displays of power recurrently stimulated the human adjustment between attack and defense. Because adaptation to the sea has been vastly more difficult than to the land, commensurate with the harder struggle it has brought greater

intellectual and material rewards. To this conquest of the sea must be assigned a peculiarly high place in history, because it has contributed to the union of the various peoples of the world, has formed a significant part of the history of man, whether that history is economic, social, political or intellectual. Hence history has always staged its most dramatic acts upon the margin of seas and oceans; here always the plot thickens and gives promise of striking and tremendous development. Rome of the seven hills pales before England of the "Seven Seas."

Universal history loses half its import, remains an aggregate of parts, fails to yield its significance as a whole, if it does not continually take into account the unifying factor of the seas. Indeed, no history is entitled to the name of universal unless it includes a record of human movements and activities on the ocean, side by side with those on the land. Our school text-books in geography present a deplorable hiatus, because they fail to make a definite study of the oceans over which man explores and colonizes and trades, as well as the land on which he plants and builds and sleeps.

The striking fact about the great world ocean to-day is the manifold relations which it has established between the dwellers on its various coasts. Marine cables, steamer and sailing routes combine to form a dense network of paths across the vast commons of the deep. Over these the commercial, political, intellectual, or even purely migrant activities of human life move from continent to continent. The distinctive value of the sea is that it promotes many-sided relations as opposed to the one-sided relation of the land. France on her eastern frontier comes into contact with people of kindred stock, living under similar conditions of climate and soil to her own; on her maritime border she is open to intermittent intercourse with all continents and climes and races of the world. To this sea border must be ascribed the share that France has taken in the history of North and South America, the West Indies, Northern and Equatorial Africa, India, China and the South Seas. So we find the great maritime peoples of the world, from the Phoenicians to the English, each figuring in the history of the whole world of its day, and helping weave into a web of universal history the stories of its various parts.

Man's normal contact with the sea is registered in his nautical achievements. If we enquire *where* the highest native efficiency in the art of navigation was attained before the spread of Mediterranean and European civilization, we find that this distinction be-

longs to the great island world of the Pacific and to the neighbouring lands of the Indian Ocean. Sailing vessels and outrigger boats of native design and construction characterize the whole sea-washed area of Indo-Malaysian civilization from Hindustan to the outermost isles of the Pacific. The eastern rim of Asia, also, belongs to this wide domain of nautical efficiency, and the coast Indians of southern Alaska and British Columbia may possibly represent an eastern spur of the same,\* thrown out in very remote times and maintained by the advantageous geographic conditions of that indented, mountainous coast. Adjoining this area on the north is the long-drawn Arctic seaboard of the Eskimo, who unaided have developed in their sealskin kayak and bidarka sea-going craft unsurpassed for the purposes of marine hunting and fishing, and who display a fearlessness and endurance born of long and enforced intimacy with the deep. Driven by the frozen deserts of his home to seek his food chiefly in the water, the Eskimo, nevertheless, finds his access to the sea barred for long months of winter by the jagged ice-pack banked up along the shore.

The highest degree of intimacy is developed in that vast island-strewn stretch of the Pacific constituting Oceania.† Here where a mild climate enables the boatman race to make a companion of the deep, where every landscape is a sea-scape, where every diplomatic visit or war campaign, every trading journey or search for new coco-palm plantation means a voyage beyond the narrow confines of the home island, there dwells a race whose splendid chest and arm muscles were developed in the gymnasium of the sea; who, living on a paltry 515,000 square miles (1,320,300 square kilometres) of scattered fragments of land, but roaming over an ocean area of twenty-five million square miles, are not more at home in their palm-wreathed islets than on the encompassing deep. Migrations, voluntary and involuntary, make up their history. Their trained sense of locality, enabling them to make voyages several hundred miles from home, has been mentioned by various explorers in Polynesia. The Marshall Islanders set down their geographical knowledge in maps which are fairly correct as to bearings but not as to distances. The Ralick Islanders of this group make charts which include islands, routes and currents.‡ Captain Cook was deeply impressed by the geographical knowledge of the people of the South

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\* Ratzel, *History of Mankind*, vol. I, pp. 153-154; vol. II, pp. 91, 100. London, 1896-1898.

† Ratzel, *History of Mankind*, vol. I, pp. 166-170. London, 1896-1898.

‡ Captain Winkler, *Sea Charts Formerly Used in the Marshall Islands*, Smithsonian Report for 1899, translated from the *Marine Rundschau*, Berlin, 1898.

Seas. A native Tahitian made for him a chart containing 74 islands, and gave an account of nearly 60 more.\* Information and directions supplied by natives have aided white explorers to many discoveries in these waters. Quiros, visiting the Duff Islands in 1606, learned the location of Ticopia, one of the New Hebrides group, three hundred miles away. Not only the excellent seamanship and the related pelagic fishing of the Polynesians bear the stamp of their predominant water environment; their mythology, their conception of a future state, the germs of their astronomical science, are all born of the sea.

Though the people living on the uttermost boundaries of this island world are 6,000 miles (or 10,000 kilometres) apart, and might be expected to be differentiated by the isolation of their island habitats, nevertheless they all have the same fundamental characteristics of physique, language and culture from New Guinea to Easter Isle, reflecting in their unity the oneness of the encompassing ocean over which they circulate.†

Midway between these semi-aquatic Polynesians and those Arctic tribes who are forced out upon the deep, struggle with it rather than associate with it, we find the inhabitants of the Mediterranean islands and peninsulas, who are favored by the mild climate and the tideless, fogless, stormless character of their sea. While such a body of water lures to intimacy, it does not breed a hardy or bold race of navigators; it is a nursery, scarcely a severe training school. Therefore we find that, except the far-famed Dalmatian sailors, who for centuries have faced the storms sweeping down from the Dinaric Alps over the turbulent surface of the Adriatic, Mediterranean seamanship does not command general confidence on the high seas. Therefore it is the German, English and Dutch steamship lines that are to-day the chief ocean carriers from Italian ports to East Africa, Asia, Australia, North and South America, despite the presence of native lines running from Genoa to Buenos Ayres, Montevideo and New York; just as it was the Atlantic states of Europe, and only these and all of these, except Germany, who, trained to venture out into the fogs and storms and unmarked paths of the *mare tenebrosum*, participated in the early voyages to the Americas. One after the other they came—Norwegians, Spaniards, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, Swedes and Danes. The anthro-geographical principle is not invalidated by the fact that Spain and England were

\* Captain James Cook, Journal of First Voyage round the World, pp. 70, 105, 221, 230. Edited by W. J. L. Wharton, London, 1893.

† Ratzel, History of Mankind, vol. I, pp. 161, 174. London, 1896-1898.

guided in their initial trans-Atlantic voyages by Italian navigators, like Columbus, Cabot and Amerigo Vespucci. The long maritime experience of Italy and its commercial relations with the Orient, reaching back into ancient times, furnished abundant material for the researches and speculations of such practical theorists; but Italy's location fixed the shores of the Mediterranean as her natural horizon, narrowed her vision to its shorter radius. Her obvious interest in the preservation of the old routes to the Orient made her turn a deaf ear to plans aiming to divert European commerce to trans-Atlantic routes. Italy's entrance upon the high seas was, therefore, reluctant and late, retarded by the necessity of outgrowing the old circumscribed outlook of the enclosed basin before adopting the wider vision of the open ocean. Venice and Genoa were crippled not only by the discovery of the sea route to India, but also by their adherence to old thalassic means and methods of navigation inadequate for the high seas. However, these Mediterranean sea folk are being gradually drawn out of their seclusion, as proved by the increase of Italian oceanic lines and the recent installation of an Hellenic steamship line between Piræus and New York.

The size of a sea or ocean is a definite factor in the power of a body of water to lure or repel maritime ventures, especially in the earlier stages of nautical development. A broken, indented coast means not only a longer and broader zone of contact between the inhabitants and the sea; it means also the breaking up of the adjacent expanse of water into so many alcoves, in which fisherman, trader and colonist may become at home, and prepare for maritime ventures farther afield. The enclosed or marginal sea lures earlier because it can be compassed by coastwise navigation; then by the proximity of its opposite shores and its usual generous equipment with islands, the next step to crosswise navigation is encouraged. For the earliest stages of maritime development, only the smaller articulations of the coast and the inshore fringe of sea inlets count. This is shown in the primitive voyages of the Greeks, before they had ventured into the Euxine or west of the forbidding Cape Malia; and in the "inside passage" navigation of the Indians of southern Alaska and British Columbia, who have never stretched their nautical ventures beyond the outermost rocks of their skerry-walled coast.

A second stage is reached when an enclosed basin is at hand to widen the maritime horizon, and when this larger field is fully exploited in all its commercial, colonial and industrial possibilities, as was done by the Phœnicians and Greeks in the Mediterranean, the

Hansa Towns in the Baltic, the Dutch and English in the North Sea. The third and final stage is reached when the nursery of the inshore estuary or gulf and the training school of the enclosed basin are in turn outgrown, and the larger maritime spirit moves on to the open ocean for its field of operation. It is a significant fact that the Norse, bred to the water in their fiords and channels behind their protecting "skerry-wall," then trained in the stormy basins of the North and Irish Seas, were naturally the first people of Europe to cross the Atlantic; because the Atlantic of their shores, narrowing like all oceans and seas towards the north, assumes almost the character of an enclosed basin. The distance from Norway to Greenland is only 1,800 miles, little more than that across the Arabian Sea between Africa and India. We trace, therefore, a certain analogy between the physical subdivisions of the world of water into inlet, marginal sea and ocean, and the anthro-geo-graphical gradations in maritime development.

The enclosed or marginal sea seems a necessary condition for the advance beyond coastwise navigation and the much later step to the open ocean. Continents without them, like Africa except for its northern face upon the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, have shown no native initiative in maritime enterprise. Africa was further cursed by the mockery of desert coasts along most of her scant thalassic front. In the Americas, we find the native races compassing a wide maritime field only in the Arctic, where the fragmentary character of the continent breaks up the ocean into Hudson's Bay, Davis Strait, Baffin Bay, Gulf of Boothia, Melville Sound and Bering Sea; and in the tropical Mediterranean of the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico. The excellent seamanship developed in the archipelagoes of southern Alaska and Chile remained abortive for maritime expansion, despite a paucity of local resources and the spur of hunger, owing to the lack of a marginal sea; but in the Caribbean basin, the Aruaks and later the Caribs spread from the southern mainland as far as Cuba.\*

Enclosed or marginal seas are historically the most important subdivisions of the ocean prior to 1492. Apart from the widening of the maritime horizon which they give to their bordering people, each has the further advantage of constituting an area of close vicinal grouping and constant interchange of cultural achievements, by which the civilization of the whole basin tends to become elevated and unified. This unification frequently extends to race also, owing to the rapidity of maritime expansion and the tendency to ethnic

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\* Hans Helmolt, *History of the World*, vol. I, pp. 188-189, 193-195. New York, 1902-1906.



amalgamation characteristic of all coast regions. We recognize an area of Mediterranean civilization from the Isthmus of Suez to the Sacred Promontory of Portugal, and in this area a long-headed, brunette Mediterranean race, clearly unified as to stock, despite local differentiations of culture, languages and nations in the various islands, peninsulas and other segregated coastal regions of this sea.\* The basin appears therefore as an historical whole; for in it a certain group of peoples concentrated their common efforts, which crossed and criss-crossed from shore to shore. Phœnicia's trade ranged westward to the outer coasts of Spain, and later Barcelona's maritime enterprises reached east to the Levant. Greece's commercial and colonial relations embraced the Crimea and the mouth of the Rhone, and Genoa's extended east to the Crimea again. The Saracens, on reaching the Mediterranean edge of the Arabian peninsula, swept the southern coasts and islands, swung up the western rim of the basin to the foot of the Pyrenees, and taught the sluggish Spaniards the art of irrigation practiced on the garden slopes of Yemen. The ships of the Crusaders from Venice, Genoa and Marseilles anchored in the ports of Mohammedanized Syria, brought the symbol of the cross back to its birthplace in Jerusalem, but carried away with them countless suggestions from the finished industries of the East. Here was give and take, expansion and counter-expansion, conquest and expulsion, all together making up a great sum of reciprocal relations embracing the whole basin, the outcome of that close geographical connection which every sharply defined sea establishes between the coasts which it washes.

The same thing has come to pass in the North Sea. Originally Celtic on its western or British side, as opposed to its eastern or Germanic coast, it has been wholly Teutonized on that flank also from the Strait of Dover to the Firth of Tay, and sprinkled with Scandinavian settlers from the Firth of Tay northward to Caithness.† The eleventh century saw this ethnic unification achieved, and the end of the Middle Ages witnessed the diffusion of the elements of a common civilization through the agency of commerce from Bruges to Bergen. The Baltic, originally Teutonic only on its northern and western shores, has in historical times become almost wholly Teutonic, including even the seaboard of Finland and much of the coast provinces of Russia.‡ Unification of civilization

\* W. L. Ripley, *The Races of Europe*, pp. 128-130, 270-273, 387-390, 407, 444, 448. New York, 1899. G. Sergi, *The Mediterranean Race*, pp. 29-37. New York, 1901.

† H. J. Mackinder, *Britain and the British Seas*, pp. 189-190. London, 1904.

‡ Sydow-Wagner *Schul-Atlas, Völker und Sprachenkarten*, No. 13. Gotha, 1905. A. Leroy-Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars*, map p. 80.

attended this unification of race. In its period of greatest historical significance from the 12th to the 17th century, the Baltic played the rôle of a northern Mediterranean. The countless shuttles of the Hanse ships wove a web of commercial intercourse between its remotest shores. Novgorod and Abö were in constant communication with Lubeck and Stralsund;\* and Wisby, on the island of Gotland at the great crossroads of the Baltic,† had the focal significance of the Piræus in ancient Ægean trade.

If we turn to Asia, we find that even the unfavorable polar location of Bering Sea has, nevertheless, been unable to rob it entirely of historical significance. This is the one spot where a native American race has transplanted itself by its own natural expansion to Asiatic shores. The circular rim and island-dotted surface have guided Eskimo settlements to the coast of the Chukchen Peninsula, where they have become partly assimilated in dress and language to the local Chukchees.‡ The same conditions also facilitated the passage of a few Chukchees across Bering Strait to the Alaskan side. At Pak (or Peek) on East Cape and on Diomed Island, situated in the narrowest part of Bering Strait, are the great intercontinental markets of the polar tribes. Here American furs have for many decades been exchanged for the reindeer skins of northern Siberia and Russian goods from far-away Moscow.§ Only the enclosed character of the sea, reported by the Danish explorer Vitus Bering, tempted the land-bred Russians, who reached the north-western coast of Siberia at the middle of the 18th century, to launch their leaky boats of unseasoned timber, push across to the American continent, and make this whole Bering basin a Russian sea;|| just as a few decades before, when land exploration of Kamchatka had revealed the enclosed character of the Sea of Okhotsk, the Russian pioneers took a straighter course across the water to their Pacific outpost of Petropavlovsk near the southern end of the peninsula. But even before the coming of the Slavs to its shores, the Sea of Okhotsk seems to have been an area of commercial and ethnic intercourse from the Amur River in Siberia in a half circle to the east, through Sakhalin, Yezo, the Kurile Islands and southern Kamchatka,¶ noticeably where the rim of the basin presented the scantiest supply

\* E. C. Semple, *The Development of the Hanse Towns in Relation to their Geographical Environment*, Bull. Amer. Geographical Soc., vol. XXXI, No. 3, 1899.

† Helen Zimmern, *The Hansa Towns*, pp. 24-25, 54-55. New York, 1895.

‡ Nordenskiöld, *The Voyage of the Vega*, pp. 565, 588, 591. New York, 1882.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 375, 403, 405, 487, 563.

|| Agnes Laut, *Sea Voyages of the Northern Ocean*, Harper's Monthly, January, 1906.

¶ Ratzel, *History of Mankind*, vol. III, pp. 446, 449, 450. London, 1896-1898.

of land and where, therefore, its meagre resources had to be eked out by fisheries and trade on the sea.

The vicinal location about an enclosed basin produces more rapidly a unification of race and culture, when some ethnic relationship and affinity already exists among the peoples inhabiting its shores. As in the ancient and mediæval Mediterranean, so in the Yellow Sea of Asia, the working of this principle is apparent. The settlement along its coasts of divergent but kindred peoples like the Chinese, Koreans and Japanese, allowed these to be easily assimilated to a Yellow Sea race and to absorb quickly any later infusion, like that of the Tatars and Manchus. China, by reason of its larger area, long-drawn coast, massive population, and early civilization, was the dominant factor in this basin; Korea and Japan were its culture colonies—a fact that justifies the phrase calling “China the Rome of the Far East.” Historical Japan began on the island of Kiu-siu, facing the Yellow Sea. Like Korea, it derived its writing, its fantastic medical notions, its industrial methods, some features of its government administration, its Buddhism and its religion of Confucius from the people about the lower Hoangho.\* Three centuries ago Japan had its colonies on Korean soil, and for purposes of piracy and smuggling penetrated far up the rivers of China. Korea has kept in touch with China by an active trade and diplomatic relations through the centuries.

But to-day China is going to school to Japan. Since Japan renounced her policy of seclusion forty years ago along with her antiquated form of government, and since Korea has been forced out of her hermit life, the potency of vicinal location around this enclosed sea has been suddenly restored. The enforced opening of the treaty ports of Japan, Korea and China simply prepared the way for this basin to reassert its power to unite, and to unite now more closely and effectively than ever before, under the law of increasing territorial areas. The stimulus was first communicated to the basin from without, from the trading nations of the Occident and that new-born Orient rising from the sea on the California shores. Japan has responded most promptly and most actively to these over-sea stimuli, just as England has, of all Europe, felt most strongly the reflex influences from trans-Atlantic lands. The awakening of this basin has started, therefore, from its seaward rim; its star has risen in the east. It is in the small countries of the world that such stars rise. The compressed energies of Japan, stirred by over-sea

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\* *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 443, 444.

contact and an improved government at home, have overleaped the old barriers and are following the lines of slight resistance which this land-bound sea affords. Helped by the bonds of geographical conditions and of race, she has begun to convert China and Korea into her culture colonies. The on-looking world feels that the ultimate welfare of China and Korea can be best nurtured by Japan, which will thus pay its old debt to the Middle Kingdom.

Despite the fact that China's history has always had a decidedly inland character, that its political expansion has been landward, that it has practiced most extensively and successfully internal colonization, and that its policy of exclusion has tended to deaden its outlook towards the Pacific, nevertheless China's direct intercourse with the west and its westward-directed influence have never, in point of significance, been comparable with that towards the east and south. Here a succession of marginal seas offered easy water-paths dotted with way stations to their outermost rim in Japan, the Philippines and remote Australia. About the South China Sea, the Gulf of Siam, the Sulu, Celebes, and Java Seas, the coastal regions of the outlying islands have for centuries received Chinese goods and culture, and a blend of that obstinately assertive Chinese blood.

The strength of these influences has decreased with every increase of distance from the indented coasts and teeming, seafaring population of South China, and with every decrease in race affinity. They have left only faint traces on the alien shores of far-away Australia. The divergent ethnic stock of the widespread Malay world has been little susceptible to these influences, which are therefore weak in the remoter islands, but clearly discernible on the coasts of the Philippines,\* Borneo, the nearer Sunda Islands, and the peninsula of Malacca, where the Chinese have had trading colonies for centuries.† But in the eastern half of Farther India, which is grouped with China by land as well as by sea, and whose race stock is largely if not purely Mongolian, these influences are very marked, so that the whole continental rim of the South China Sea, from Formosa to the Isthmus of Malacca, is strongly assimilated in race and culture. Tongking, exposed to those modifying influences which characterise all land frontiers, as well as to coastwise intercourse, is in its people and civilization merely a transcript of China. The coast districts and islands of Annam are occupied by Chinese as far as the hills of Cambodia, and the name of Cochin China points to the origin of its predominant population. One-sixth of the inhabitants

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\* Census of the Philippine Islands, 1903, vol. I, pp. 318-320, 478, 481-495.

† Hans Helmolt, *History of the World*, vol. II, pp. 544-545. New York, 1905.

of Siam are Chinese, some of whom have filtered through the northern border; Bangkok, the capital, has a large Chinese quarter. The whole economic life and no small part of the intellectual life of the eastern face of Farther India as far as Singapore is centered in the activity of the Chinese.\*

The historical significance of an enclosed sea basin depends upon its zonal location and its location in relation to the surrounding lands. We observe a steady decrease of historical importance from south to north through the connected series of the Yellow, Japan, Okhotsk, Bering Seas and the Arctic basin, miscalled ocean. The far-northern location of the Baltic, with its long winters of ice-bound ports and its glaciated lands, retarded its inclusion in the field of history, curtailed its important historical period, and reduced the intensity of its historical life, despite the brave, eager activity of the Hanseatic League. The Mediterranean had the advantage, not only of a more favorable zonal situation, but of a location at the meeting place of three continents and on the line of maritime traffic across the eastern hemisphere from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

These advantages it shares in some degree with the Indian Ocean, which, as Ratzel justly argues, is not a true ocean, at best, only half an ocean. North of the Equator, where it is narrowed and enclosed like an inland sea, it loses the hydrospheric and atmospheric characteristic of a genuine ocean. Currents and winds are disorganized by the close-hugging lands. Here the steady northeast trade wind is replaced by the alternating air currents of the northeast and south-west monsoons, which at a very early date enabled merchant vessels to break away from their previous slow, coastwise path, and to strike a straight course on their voyages between the east coast of Africa and India.† Moreover, this northern half of the Indian Ocean looks like a larger Mediterranean with its southern coast removed. It has the same east and west series of peninsulas harbouring differentiated nationalities, the same northward running recesses, but all on a larger scale. It has linked together the history of Asia and Africa; and by the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, it has drawn Europe and the Mediterranean into its sphere of influence. At the western corner of the Indian Ocean a Semitic people, the Arabs of Oman and Yemen, here first developed brilliant maritime activity, like their Phœnician kinsmen of the Lebanon seaboard. Similar geographic conditions in their home regions and a nearly similar intercontinental location combined to make them the middlemen of two or three con-

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\* Ratzel, *History of Mankind*, vol. III, pp. 407-412. London, 1896-1898.

† Bunbury, *History of Ancient Geography*, vol. II, pp. 351, 470, 471. London, 1883.

tinents. Just as the Phoenicians, by way of the Mediterranean, reached and roused slumberous north Africa into historical activity and became the medium for the distribution of Egypt's culture, so these Semites of the Arabian shores knocked at the long-closed doors of east Africa facing on the Indian basin, and drew this region into the history of southern Asia. Thus the Africa of the enclosed seas was awakened to some measure of historical life, while the Africa of the wide Atlantic slept on.

From the dawn of history the northern Indian Ocean was a thoroughfare. Alexander the Great's rediscovery of the old sea route to the Orient sounds like a modern event in relation to the gray ages behind it. Along this thoroughfare Indian colonists, traders, and priests carried the elements of Indian civilization to the easternmost Sunda Isles, and Oriental wares, sciences and religions moved westward to the margin of Europe and Africa. The Indian Ocean produced a civilization of its own, with which it colored a vast semi-circle of land reaching from Java to Abyssinia, and more faintly, owing to the wider divergence of race, the further stretch from Abyssinia to Mozambique.

Thus the northern Indian Ocean, owing to its form, its location in the angle between Asia and Africa and the latitude where, round the whole earth, "the zone of greatest historical density" begins, and especially its location just southeast of the Mediterranean as the eastern extension of that great maritime track of ancient and modern times between Europe and China, has been involved in a long series of historical events. From the historical standpoint, prior to 1492 it takes a far higher place than the Atlantic and Pacific, owing to its nature as an enclosed sea.\* But like all such basins, this northern Indian Ocean attained its zenith of historical importance in early times. In the 16th century it suffered a partial eclipse, which passed only with the opening of the Suez Canal. During this interval, however, the Portuguese, Dutch and English had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and entered this basin on its open or oceanic side. By their trading stations, which soon traced the outlines of its coasts from Sofala in South Africa around to Java, they made this ocean an alcove of the Atlantic, and embodied its events in the Atlantic period of history. It is this open or oceanic side which differentiates the Indian Ocean physically, and therefore historically, from a genuine enclosed sea.

The limitation of every enclosed or marginal sea lies in its small

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\* For a full discussion of the Indian Ocean, see Hans Helmolt, *History of the World*, vol. II, pp. 580-584, 602-610. New York, 1904-1907.

area and in the relatively restricted circle of its bordering lands. Only small peninsulas and islands can break its surface and short stretches of coast combine to form its shores. It affords, therefore, only limited territories as goals for expansion, restricted resources and populations to furnish the supply and demand of trade. What lands could the Mediterranean present to the colonial outlook of the Greeks comparable to the North America of the expanding English or the Brazil of the Portuguese? Yet the Mediterranean as a colonial field had great advantages in point of size over the Baltic, which is only one-sixth as large (2,509,500 and 431,000 square kilometres respectively), and especially over the Red Sea and Persian Gulf, whose effective areas were greatly reduced by the aridity of their surrounding lands. But the precocious development and early cessation of growth marking all Mediterranean national life have given to this basin a variegated history; and in every period and every geographical region of it, from ancient Phœnicia through the Roman Empire to modern Italy, the early exhaustion of resources and dwarfing of ideals which characterize small areas become more and more conspicuous. The history of Sweden, Denmark and the Hanse Towns in the Baltic, and of Yemen on the Red Sea tells the same story, the story of a hothouse plant, forced in germination and growth, then stifled in the close air.

Growth demands space. Therefore, the progress of history has been attended by an advance from smaller to larger marine areas, with a constant increase in those manifold relations between peoples and lands which the water is able to establish. Every great epoch of history has had its own sea, and every succeeding epoch has enlarged its maritime field. The Greek had the Ægean, the Roman the whole Mediterranean, to which the Mediæval made an addition in the North Sea and the Baltic. The modern period has had the Atlantic, and the 20th century is now entering upon the final epoch of the World Ocean. The gradual inclusion of this World Ocean in the widened scope of history has been due to the expansion of European peoples, who, for the past twenty centuries, have been the most far-reaching agents in the making of universal history. Owing to the location and structure of their continent, they have always found the larger outlet in a western sea. In the south the field widened from the Phœnician Sea to the Ægean, then to the Mediterranean, on to the Atlantic, and across it to its western shores; in the north it moved from the quiet Baltic to the tide-swept North Sea and across the North Atlantic. Only the South Atlantic

brought European ships to the great world highway of the South Sea, and gave them the choice of an eastern or western route to the Pacific. Every new voyage in the age of discovery expanded the historical horizon; and every improvement in the technique of navigation has helped to eliminate distance and reduced intercourse on the World Ocean to the time-scale of the ancient Mediterranean.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the larger size of the oceanic horizon has meant a corresponding increase in the content and importance of history. Such an intense, concentrated national life as occurred in those little Mediterranean countries in ancient times is not duplicated now, unless we find a parallel in Japan's recent career in the Yellow Sea basin. There was something as cosmic in the colonial ventures of the Greeks to the wind-swept shores of the Crimea or barbarous wilds of Massilia, as in the establishment of English settlements on the brimming rivers of Virginia or the torrid coast of Malacca. The inner significance of Alexander's conquest of the Asiatic rim of the Mediterranean and Rome's political unification of the basin does not lose in comparison with the Russification of northern Asia and the establishment of the British Empire.

The ocean has always performed one function in the evolution of history; it has always provided the outlet for the exercise of redundant national powers. The abundance of opportunity which it presents to these disengaged energies depends upon the size, location and other geographic conditions of the bordering lands. These opportunities are limited in an enclosed basin, larger in the oceans, and largest in the northern halves of the oceans, owing to the widening of all land-masses towards the north and the consequent contraction of the oceans and seas in the same latitudes.

A result of this grouping is the abundance of land in the northern hemisphere, and the vast predominance of water in the southern, by reason of which these two hemispheres have each assumed a distinct rôle in history. The northern hemisphere offers the largest advantages for the habitation of man, and significantly enough, contains a population five times that of the southern hemisphere. The latter, on the other hand, with its vast, unbroken water areas, has been the great oceanic highway for circum-mundane exploration and trade. This great water girdle of the South Seas had to be discovered before the spherical form of the earth could be established. In the wide territory of the northern hemisphere civilization has experienced an uninterrupted development, first in the Old World,



because this offered in its large area north of the Equator the fundamental conditions for rapid evolution; then it was transplanted with greatest success to North America. The northern hemisphere contains, therefore, "the zone of greatest historical density," from which the track of the South Seas is inconveniently remote. Hence we find in recent decades a reversion to the old east-west path along the southern rim of Eurasia, now perfected by the Suez Canal, and to be extended in the near future around the world by the union of the Pacific with the Caribbean Sea at Panama; so that finally the northern hemisphere will have its own circum-mundane waterway, along the line of greatest intercontinental intercourse.

The size of the ocean as a whole is so enormous, and yet its various subdivisions are so uniform in their physical aspect, that their differences of size produce less conspicuous historical effects than their diversity of area would lead one to expect. A voyage across the 177,000 square miles (453,500 square kilometres) of the Black Sea does not differ materially from one across the 979,000 square miles (2,509,500 square kilometres) of the Mediterranean; or a voyage across the 213,000 square miles (547,600 square kilometres) of the North Sea, from one across the three-hundredfold larger area of the Pacific. The ocean does not, like the land, wear upon its surface the evidences and effects of its size; it wraps itself in the same garment of blue waves or sullen swell wherever it appears; but the outward cloak of the land varies from zone to zone. The most significant anthropo-geographical influence of the size of the oceans, as opposed to that of the smaller seas, comes from the larger circle of lands which the former open to maritime enterprise. For primitive navigation, when the sailor crept from headland to headland and from island to island, the small enclosed basin with its close-hugging shores did indeed offer the best conditions. To-day, only the great tonnage of ocean-going vessels may reflect in some degree the vast areas they traverse between continent and continent. Coasting craft and ships designed for local traffic in enclosed seas are in general smaller, as in the Baltic, though the enormous commerce of the Great Lakes, which constitute in effect an inland sea, demands the largest vessels.

The vast size of the oceans has been the basis of their neutrality. The neutrality of the seas is a recent idea in political history. The principle arose in connection with the oceans, and from them was extended to the smaller basins, which previously tended to be regarded as private political domains. Their limited area, which

enabled them to be compassed, enabled them also to be appropriated, controlled and even policed. The Greek excluded the Phœnician from the Ægean and made it an Hellenic sea. Carthage and Tarantum tried to draw the dead line for Roman merchantmen at the Lacinian Cape, the doorway into the Ionian Sea, and thereby involved themselves in the famous Punic Wars. The whole Mediterranean became a Roman sea, the *mare nostrum*. Pompey's fleet was able to police it effectively and to exterminate the pirates in a few months, as Cicero tells us in his oration for the Manilian Law. The Venetians wished dominion over the Adriatic to be confirmed to them by the Pope. Sweden and Denmark strove for a *dominium maris Baltici*; but the Hansa Towns of northern Germany secured the maritime supremacy in the basin, kept a toll-gate at its entrance, and levied toll or excluded merchant ships at their pleasure, a right which after the fall of the Hanseatic power was assumed by Denmark and maintained till 1857. "The Narrow Seas" over which England claimed sovereignty from 1299 to 1805, and on which she exacted a salute from every foreign vessel, included the North Sea as far as Stadland Cape in Norway, the English Channel, and the Bay of Biscay down to Cape Finisterre in northern Spain.\*

At the beginning of the 16th century the Indian Ocean was a Portuguese sea, and Spain was trying to monopolize the Caribbean and even the Pacific Ocean. But the immense areas of these pelagic fields of enterprise, and the rapid intrusion into them of other colonial powers soon rendered obsolete in practice the principle of the *mare clausum*, and introduced that of the *mare liberum*. The political theory of the freedom of the seas seems to have needed vigorous support even toward the end of the 17th century. At this time we find writers like Salmasius and Hugo Grotius invoking it to combat Portuguese monopoly of the Indian Ocean as a *mare clausum*. Grotius in a lengthy dissertation upholds the thesis that "*Jure gentium quibusvis ad quosvis liberam esse navigationem*," and supports it by an elaborate argument and quotations from the ancient poets, philosophers, orators and historians.† This principle was not finally acknowledged by England as applicable to the "Narrow Seas" till 1805. Now, by international agreement, political domain extends only to one marine league from shore or within cannon range. The rest of the vast water area which comprises three-fourths of the earth's surface remains the unobstructed highway of the world.

\* H. J. Mackinder, *Britain and the British Seas*, p. 24, note. London, 1904.

† *Hugonis Grotii, Mare Liberum sive de jure quod Batavis competit ad indicana commercia dissertatio*, contained in his *De Jure Belli et Pacis*. *Hagae Comitiss, apud Arnoldum Leers*, 1680.